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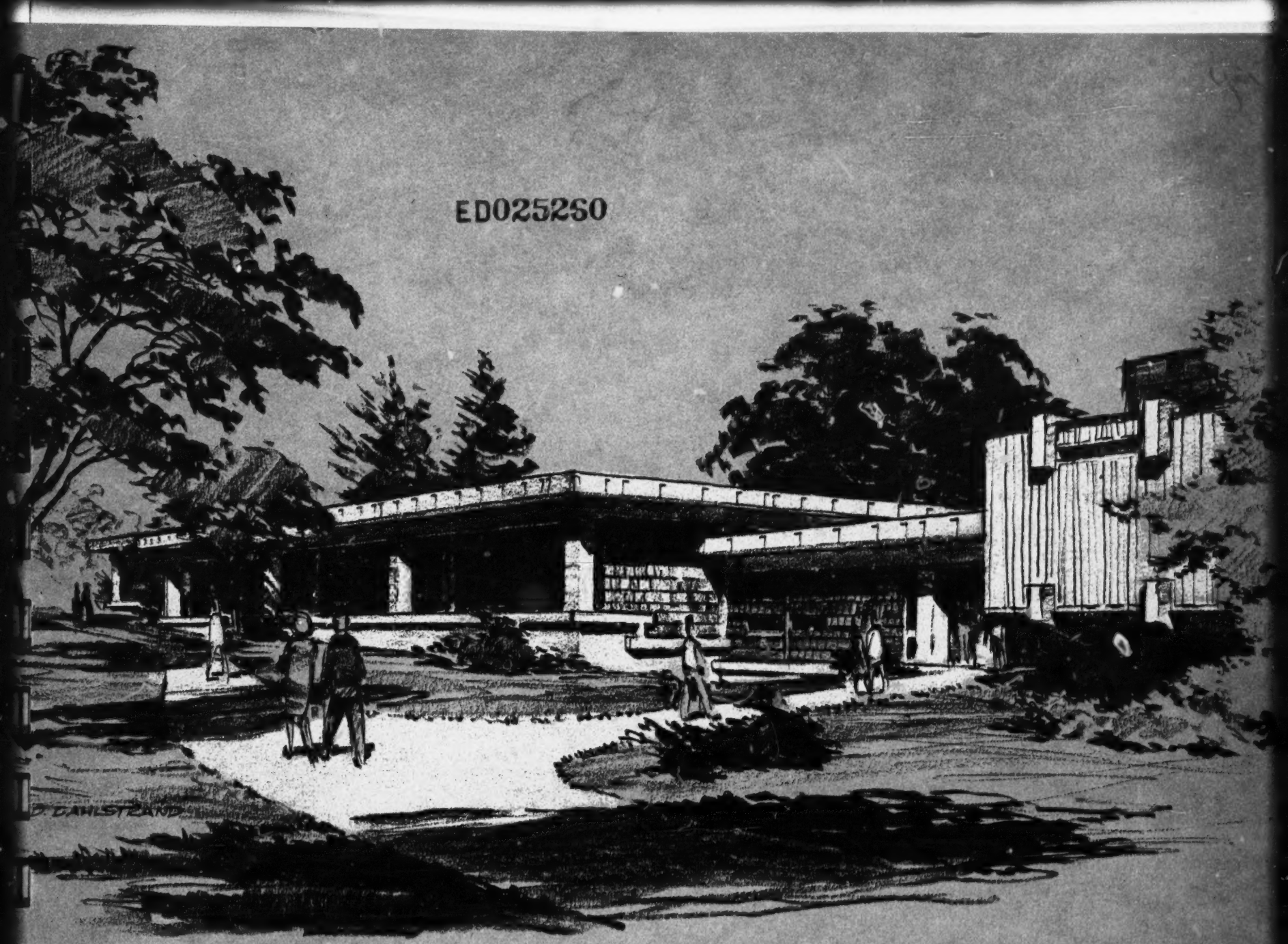
A random sample of 750 adults stratified on the basis of age, sex, and employment status was surveyed to determine attitudes toward the importance of a college education for high school graduates in the college district, college plans for their children, attitudes and knowledge about the college, and voting intentions on a future bond issue. On the basis of their answers to a 37-item questionnaire, it was concluded that: (1) chances of the bond issue passing were excellent if a campaign was well-mounted, (2) stated intentions indicate 75% of those voting favored the issue, (3) an immediate election was not recommended, as those opposed to the issue were more certain of their intention than those in favor, (4) an educational campaign before the election would be beneficial, as those familiar with the college were much more likely to favor the issue, (5) in light of community support for higher education, the number of pre-college-age children in the area for whom college plans had been made (nearly half for a two-year college), and the high regard for the college held by the community, the college was in an excellent position to wage such a campaign. (MC)




ED025280

# A Study of COMMUNITY ATTITUDES TOWARDS EDUCATION and WEST VALLEY JUNIOR COLLEGE August 1968

ROPER RESEARCH ASSOCIATES, INCORPORATED

UNIVERSITY OF CALIF.
LOS ANGELES

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# A STUDY OF
# COMMUNITY ATTITUDES TOWARDS EDUCATION AND
# WEST VALLEY JUNIOR COLLEGE

Conducted for

THE GOVERNING BOARD OF THE

WEST VALLEY JOINT JUNIOR COLLEGE DISTRICT

August 1968

ROPER RESEARCH ASSOCIATES
Incorporated

AN EXACT REPRODUCTION BY
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# FOREWORD

# FOREWORD

## The Purpose of the Study

The purposes of this study were to determine, from a cross section of adults 21 years of age and older in the West Valley Junior College area:

(a) Attitudes toward the importance of college education (junior and/or four-year college) for high school graduates in the West Valley Junior College District.

(b) The nature and type of college plans, if any, among parents who believe they will send their children to college.

(c) Attitudes and knowledge about West Valley College itself.

(d) Voting intentions with regard to a future West Valley College Bond issue.

## The Sample

The sample used in this study was a cross-section of 750 adults 21 years of age and older living in the West Valley Junior College District area. The universe consisted of the 30 U. S. Census tracts lying wholly or partially within the West Valley College District area. 75 interviewing locations were selected from these tracts, at random proportionate to the known tract population, or the estimated population where a tract lay partially within the universe area. Each interviewing location consisted of: (a) a predesignated female block from which only female interviews were obtained, and (b) the nearest adjacent or contiguous block from which male interviews were obtained.

Predesignated starting households were assigned for each block, and directions given for proceeding around each block to meet its quota of interviews. In addition, each interviewer was given age, sex, and employed female quotas to insure their correct representation in the sample.

While 25 of the total 30 Census tracts in the universe are represented in our sample of 750 adults, it should be noted that this sample constitutes a cross section of the entire West Valley College district area, and not a number of cross sections of individual towns or places within it, such as a cross section of Saratoga, or Campbell, etc. We have shown results for such individual areas in tabulation, but the margin of error around any such "locality" figures is greater than if separate cross sections had been drawn. Therefore, small percentage differences between results obtained in Saratoga, or Campbell, etc. should be ignored.

All interviews were conducted in person in respondents' homes. Interviewing was conducted between July 23rd and 31st, 1968.

## Definition of Terms

Many of the tables show responses separately for strategic subgroups. These subgroups or "standard breaks" should be understood before continuing to the details of the report:

### Voting History in 1966

Questions 29 and 30 asked whether or not respondents voted in the 1966 bond issue election, and if so, how they had voted. This breakdown divides the sample into:

#### Those Who Voted in 1966

Voted for the bond issue

Voted against it

Don't remember, or refused

#### Did Not Vote in 1966 or Don't Remember

### Voting Intentions

Question 32c explained to all respondents what a future bond issue for West Valley would entail, and if passed, what it would add to

an average homeowner's taxes per year. They were then asked, if there were to be another bond issue, whether they thought they would probably vote for it, or against it, or wouldn't bother voting at all. This breakdown divides respondents into the following groups:

Those Who Would Vote

Would vote for the issue,

Would vote against it

Wouldn't Vote, or Don't Know

West Valley College Attendance

At the end of the questionnaire all respondents were assigned into one of the two following groups:

(a) Those who now have or have had a child attend West Valley College.

(b) Those who do not or have not in the past had a child attend West Valley College.

College Plans For Child

In Question 11, all respondents with one or more children of high school age or less were asked whether they thought this child (or the oldest child of high school age or less) would definitely or probably go to college, or definitely or probably not go to college. This breakdown divides this portion of the sample into these two groups based on their current college expectations.

West Valley Plans For Child

All parents with a child of high school age or less who thought that he or she would probably go to college when old enough were asked in Question 20 to estimate the probability of their sending the child to West Valley. This breakdown divides respondents into three groups: those who thought they

would definitely or probably send the child to West Valley, or definitely or probably would not, or who were undecided.

Occupation

All respondents were asked their occupation in Question 35. This breakdown combines some of the categories as shown on the questionnaire as follows:

| Occupation Category | | Questionnaire Classification |
|---|---|---|
| Executive or professional | = | Top management, major professional, executive, administrative, lesser professional |
| White collar | = | Small business owner, white collar, clerical, technician, minor administrators, salesmen |
| Blue collar | = | Skilled, semi-skilled, and unskilled laborers, service and protective workers. |
| Housewife | = | Housewife |
| Other | = | Farmers, other |

Two or Four Year College Preference

Parents with pre-college children were asked in Question 16 if they preferred to start their child in a four-year college or university, or start in a two-year junior or community college and then possibly transfer to a four-year college later. This breakdown divides parents into those who said four-year, two-year, or did not know what their preference was.

Extent of Knowledge About West Valley College

In Question 22 all respondents were asked if they felt they know a good deal about West Valley, a fair amount, or very little about the college.

This standard breakdown divides respondents into one of these three categories depending on their answers.

Two Notes On The Questionnaire and The Tables

(1) The questionnaire used in this study, which is enclosed in this report, is of the "circle ahead" type. The interviewers were instructed to ask every circled question (either pre-circled by us or circled by the interviewer), in sequence, unless specifically directed otherwise.

(2) In many of the tables in the computer print-out of all tabulations, the questions shown are much briefer or paraphrased version of the longer questions that appear on the questionnaire and were asked respondents. The computer was programmed to round out all the percentages to the nearest whole number. Thus the answers in some cases may exceed or fall short of 100% by a percentage point or two in some cases.

The tables themselves are included in a separate bound volume.

# QUESTIONNAIRE

STUDY NO. 362 July 1968

(ASK EVERY CIRCLED QUESTION IN SEQUENCE UNLESS DIRECTED NOT TO)

(1a.) I'm from Roper Research Associates. We are doing a study about college education for young people. By college education we mean either a two year community college education--one that gives a youngster specific vocational training or additional academic courses so that he can transfer later on to a four year college, or a normal four year college professional or academic education. First of all, do you think it is highly desirable that all young people who want to go to college be given testing and counseling in high school to see what their college potential is--whether they should go and where they should go, or that it is a good idea for most young people, but not all of them, or that it is only necessary to provide testing and counseling in questionable cases?

Highly desirable for all..... 1

Good idea for most, but not all.... 2

Only needed in questionable cases.. 3

Don't know..... 4 5/

(b.) Now, how do you feel in general about some form of college education for young people in this area today--and by some form we mean either a vocational or academic or professional education, and for either two or four years. Do you think that:

1. Every boy and girl who graduates from your local high schools should have an opportunity to get some form of a college education,..... 1

OR

2. That every boy who graduates from high school should have a chance to go but that a college education isn't so important for girls,..... 2

OR

3. That only high school graduates who really like school and have the ability should go to college,..... 3

OR

4. That only those who need special college training like doctors, lawyers and scientists should go to college--the rest should get the training they need in high school or on the job?..... 4 6/

(c.) Switching away from education for youngsters now, and turning to the subject of adult education, do you think it is highly desirable that the local colleges in this area provide a wide variety of courses for adults--ranging from short courses in things like how to prepare your income tax up to teaching new job skills like becoming an X-ray technicians, or that it is a good idea even if many adults wouldn't take advantage of any courses, or that this is really something that very few adults would need or want?

Highly desirable..... 1

Good idea..... 2

Few would want or need... 3

Don't know..... 4 7/

2. Some of the questions we ask depend upon whether or not you have children, and if you do, how old they are. Are you married, widowed, divorced or single?

Married..... 1
Widowed..... 2
Divorced..... 3
Separated..... 4
} (CONTINUE)

Single..... 5 (SKIP TO 22) 8/

3. Do you have any children--either living here at home or somewhere else?

Yes.... 1 (CONTINUE)
No..... 2 (SKIP TO 22) 9/

4. Would you call off all the statements on this card that are true in your case? (HAND RESPONDENT CARD) (MAY MULTIPLE RECORD)

We have one or more children of high school age or less..... 1 (CIRCLE 7)

We have one or more children of college or university age..... 2 (CIRCLE 6)

We have one or more children who are beyond the college or university age..... 3 (CIRCLE 5) 10/

5. Did the child or children you have who are beyond the college age attend college or not? (RECORD "YES") IF ANY ATTENDED)

| | 5. | 6. |
|---|---|---|
| Yes..... | 1 | 3 |
| No..... | 2 | 4 |

11/

6. Does the child or children you have of college age attend a college or university now, or not? (RECORD UNDER COLUMN 6 ABOVE) (RECORD "YES" IF ANY ATTEND)

INSTRUCTION: IF 7 NOT CIRCLED, SKIP TO QUESTION 22.

7. How many children of high school age or less do you have?

One..... 1 (CIRCLE 8)
More than one... 2 (CIRCLE 9) 12/

8. What is the child's age and sex? (RECORD BOTH BELOW)

| | 8,9. | |
|---|---|---|
| | Male | Female |
| Under 5..... | 1 | 4 |
| 5 - 13..... | 2 | 5 |
| 14 - 18..... | 3 | 6 |

13/

9. What is the age and sex of your oldest child of high school age or less? (RECORD BOTH ABOVE)

10. Leaving aside whether people can afford it or not, how do you feel about the actual usefulness of a college education for (child) (oldest child)? Which of these statements comes closest to expressing your feeling? (HAND RESPONDENT CARD)

1. It would be essential for economic, intellectual and social reasons to go to college..... 1

2. It would be necessary to go, but basically only to earn a higher income..... 2

3. It would be desirable, but only if it can be easily afforded..... 3

4. It would be unnecessary--a waste of time and money..... 4 14/

11. As things look now, do you think (child) (oldest child) will <u>definitely</u> go to college, <u>probably</u> go, or probably <u>not</u> go, or <u>definitely</u> not go? (FORCE CHOICE)

Definitely go..... 1
Probably go..... 2
} (CONTINUE)

Probably not go..... 3
Definitely not go..... 4
} (SKIP TO 22)

15/

INSTRUCTION: ASK PARENTHETICAL SENTENCE IF CHILD IS LESS THAN HIGH SCHOOL AGE.

12. (I'd like you to try to answer these next few questions, even though (child) is pretty young). As things look now, would you probably prefer (child) to attend a small college--400 students or less, a medium sized college of 400 up to a few thousand students, or a very large college or university?

Small..... 1

Medium..... 2

Very large..... 3

Don't know, size makes no difference..... 4 16/

13. Would you prefer a private college or a state college or university?

Private..... 1

State..... 2

Don't know..... 3 17/

14. Would you prefer __(child)__ to go to college here in California, or somewhere else in the west but not California, or somewhere east of the Mississippi?

California..... 1 (CIRCLE 15)

Other Western State... 2

East of Mississippi... 3

Don't know..... 4 18/

15. If your child were to go to school here in California, do you think (he) (she) would be better off living at college, or living at home and commuting to college?

At college... 1

At home..... 2

Don't know... 3 19/

16. Would you prefer __(child)__ to start in a four year college or university, or start in a two year junior or community college, and then possibly transfer to a four year college later on if __(child)__ wants to?

4 year..... 1

2 year..... 2

Don't know... 3 20/

17. Here is a list of factors that could be important in considering what college to send __(child)__ to. (HAND RESPONDENT CARD) Would you read down the list please? (PAUSE) Now, as I call them off, would you tell me for each one whether it will be an extremely important factor to you, a fairly important one, or not very important one to you:

| | Extremely important | Fairly important | Not important, don't know | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Tuition costs?..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 21/ |
| The size of the student body?..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 22/ |
| Its academic standards?..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 23/ |
| Where it is located?..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 24/ |
| Its social prestige or status?..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 25/ |
| Whether it is a private or public college?.... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 26/ |
| The social opportunities it provides?..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 27/ |
| The kind and number of courses it offers?..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 28/ |
| Whether it provides vocational courses or not? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 29/ |

18. Speaking of courses, which of the things on this card would you want to be <u>sure</u> were available at whatever college you send __(child)__ to? (HAND RESPONDENT CARD)

Liberal Arts..... 1

Professional training... 2

Vocational training..... 3 30/

19. Some colleges are considered to have really good reputations. What does a college have or offer that in your mind makes it a really good one? (PROBE)

31-

32-

33-

20. You may have already answered this, but just to double check--when __(child)__ is old enough, do you think you would <u>definitely</u> send him to West Valley Junior College, or <u>probably</u> would, or probably would <u>not</u>, or <u>definitely</u> would not? (Just as a guess)

Definitely would..... 1

Probably would..... 2

Probably would not..... 3

Definitely would not.... 4

Don't know..... 5 34/

21. Why do you (think you would) (think you wouldn't) (have doubts about it)?

35-

36-

37-

INSTRUCTION: ASK EVERYONE

22. Do you feel you know a good deal about West Valley Community College, or a fair amount, or very little about the college?

Good deal ..... 1 } (CONTINUE)
Fair amount..... 2 }

Very little, nothing 3 (SKIP TO 29) 38/

23. I'm going to ask you about a number of different things about West Valley. For each one, please tell me if you would rate the college as excellent, satisfactory, or unsatisfactory--compared with other California community colleges. How about West Valley's <u>academic</u> <u>standards</u>--do you feel they are excellent, satisfactory, or unsatisfactory? (READ REST OF LIST AND RECORD)

| | Excellent | Satis-factory | Unsatis-factory | Don't know | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Academic standards?..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 39/ |
| 2. Its social prestige or status?..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 40/ |
| 3. The number and kind of courses it offers..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 41/ |
| 4. Its location at Campbell?..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 42/ |
| 5. Its buildings at Campbell?..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 43/ |
| 6. The social opportunities it provides for students?..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 44/ |
| 7. Its relationship with its students? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 45/ |
| 8. Its relationship with the community it serves?..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 46/ |

24. Do you know for <u>certain</u> whether West Valley offers a thorough career counselling program for its students who are about to graduate, <u>or</u> do you think they <u>probably</u> have one but aren't certain about it, <u>or</u> don't you know one way or the other?

Know for certain .. 1

Think they do ..... 2

Don't know..... 3 47/

25. To sum this up, for a new community college, do you feel West Valley has been growing at a satisfactory rate in size, reputation and excellence, or do you think more needs to be done at a faster rate for it to satisfactorily serve this area?

Growing at satisfactory rate... 1

More needs to be done faster... 2 (CIRCLE 26)

Don't know..... 3 48/

26. What do you feel needs doing at a faster rate? (PROBE)

49-

50-

27. Has West Valley College benefited you personally in any way--such as providing you with adult educational offerings or speakers, or trained employees, or more customers, etc.?

Yes..... 1 (CIRCLE 28a)

No..... 2 } (CIRCLE 28b)

Don't know... 3 } 51/

28a. How has it benefited you?

52-

53-

b. What could West Valley do that would directly benefit you in some way?

52-

53-

(ASK EVERYONE)

29. Back in 1966 there was a bond issue put before the voters here for West Valley College. Did you vote in that election?

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Yes..... | 1 | (CIRCLE 30) |
| No..... | 2 | |
| Don't know... | 3 | 54/ |

30. Did you vote for or against the bond issue?

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| For..... | 1 | (CIRCLE 31) |
| Against..... | 2 | |
| Don't know... | 3 | |
| Refused..... | 4 | 55/ |

31. Why did you vote (for) (against) the issue then? (PROBE)

56-

57-

58-

32a. At the present time West Valley College has a campus in Campbell and is in the process of completing a new campus in Saratoga. It also has plans to establish another campus somewhere else in this district--wherever it would best meet the peoples' needs. Assuming that this future campus will be added, do you feel that the Saratoga West Valley Campus is in an excellent location, a good one, or only a fair location, or a poor one?

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Excellent..... | 1 | |
| Good..... | 2 | |
| Fair..... | 3 | |
| Poor..... | 4 | |
| Don't know.... | 5 | 59/ |

b. Switching to the subject of this future or third campus--where do you think it should be located: in Cambrian, or someplace else in the San Jose area but not Cambrian, or in Santa Clara, or in Campbell--either at some other location in Campbell or by adding on to the existing Campbell location?

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Cambrian..... | 1 | |
| San Jose other than Cambrian.... | 2 | |
| Santa Clara..... | 3 | |
| Campbell..... | 4 | |
| Don't know..... | 5 | 60/ |

32c. If another bond issue for West Valley were put before the voters, it would be to complete the new Saratoga campus, and acquire another campus site elsewhere here in the district. If passed, it would add somewhere between $7 and $15 per year to the average homeowner's taxes for each of the next 20 years--about $10 per year if your home is worth $20,000, for example.

If there were to be another West Valley college bond issue election, do you think you would probably vote <u>for</u> the bond issue,<u>against</u> it,or do you think you probably <u>wouldn't bother</u> voting one way or the other?

Vote for issue ..... 1 } (CIRCLE 33a AND 34)
Vote against it..... 2 }

Wouldn't vote, don't know ..... 3 } (CIRCLE 33b)

61/

33a. Why do you think you would vote (for) (against) such a bond issue--what would be all your reasons? (PROBE)

62-

63-

64-

64-

33b. Why don't you think you would bother to vote, or don't know whether you would or not?

65-

66-

67-

34. If a new bond issue is put before the voters again, who or what would you most respect in making up your mind how to vote--a local newspaper, or radio or TV station, or someone who you know personally or by reputation or what? (PROBE TO GET <u>SPECIFIC</u> ANSWERS--<u>NAME</u> OF PAPER OR STATION, <u>NAME</u> AND POSITION OF PERSON, ETC.)

68-

69-

70-

( O V E R )

Now some questions for tabulating purposes.

35. What is your occupation?

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Top management, top talent, and major professional | 1 | |
| Executive, administrative, lesser professional | 2 | |
| Owner--small retail store or business | 3 | |
| Technicians, minor administrative, and low supervisory | 4 | |
| White collar, clerical (non-supervisory) | 5 | |
| Skilled and semi-skilled labor | 6 | |
| Unskilled labor | 7 | |
| Service and protective workers | 8 | |
| Salesmen | 9 | |
| Farmers (owners and managers) | 0 | |
| Housewife | X | |
| Other | Y | 71/ |

36. Which daily or weekly newspapers, if any, do you read regularly?

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| San Francisco Chronicle | 1 | |
| San Francisco Examiner | 2 | |
| San Jose Mercury-News | 3 | |
| Los Gatos and Saratoga Times Observer | 4 | |
| Santa Clara Journal | 5 | |
| West Valley Times | 6 | |
| Campbell Press | 7 | |
| Cambrian News | 8 | |
| None | 9 | 72/ |

37. What is the last grade of school you finished--not including special courses like art, or secretarial, and so on?

| | |
|---|---|
| Grade school | 1 |
| High school | 2 |
| College | 3 |

(FACTUAL)

| Sex | | |
|---|---|---|
| Male | 1 | 74/ |
| Female | 2 | |

| Age | | |
|---|---|---|
| 21 - 34 | 1 | 75/ |
| 35 - 49 | 2 | |
| 50 and over | 3 | |

| Location | | |
|---|---|---|
| Santa Clara | 1 | 76/ |
| Campbell | 2 | |
| Cambrian | 3 | |
| Los Gatos | 4 | |
| Monte Sereno | 5 | |
| Saratoga | 6 | |
| Other | 7 | |

| Socio-Economic level | | |
|---|---|---|
| A | 1 | 77/ |
| B | 2 | |
| C | 3 | |
| D | 4 | |

Record One:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Household has or has had child in West Valley College | 1 | 78/ |
| No child has attended West Valley College | 2 | |

Name _____

Address _____ Apt. # _____

City _____ Telephone No. _____

Respondent # _____ Interviewer's Initials _____

# SUMMARY HIGHLIGHTS

## SUMMARY HIGHLIGHTS

The following are what we believe to be the most important findings in the study. They are presented here briefly, relatively free of qualifying language and undocumented in the interest of conciseness and clarity. These findings are documented more thoroughly in the much longer discussion that follows.

1. In our judgment, West Valley College has an excellent chance of winning the future bond issue election, if it is preceded by a well-mounted campaign on behalf of the college.

2. On the basis of present stated voting intentions, West Valley would win by the 66% margin required. Interest in voting appears to be high, and high percentages are disposed in favor of a future bond issue throughout the area. There are no pockets of dissidence in the sense that some groups in the population are opposed to the bond issue (with the exception of Saratoga residents, who are only lukewarm).

3. We would caution against calling an immediate election, however. Stated intentions to vote for the bond issue are probably not as strong as they appear to be--for two reasons. First, it is easy to "vote" in an interview, and vote for something as respectable as education. But realizing this vote at the polls is a different matter. Those now in favor of the bond issue seem less firm in their convictions than those who are now opposed to the bond issue. Secondly, West Valley College is an unknown commodity to most potential voters--about three-quarters say they know little or nothing about West Valley.

4. Since those who do know something about West Valley College are much more apt to favor a bond issue than those who are unfamiliar with the college, an educational campaign by West Valley prior

to calling an election seems dictated.

5. And West Valley is in an excellent position to wage a successful campaign, for it "fits" the various needs of the educationally-minded community it serves in a number of ways:

a. Very strong support exists in the community for providing adequate higher education facilities for all high school graduates, and for sending all graduates to college.

b. 3 out of 5 households have one or more children of pre-college age, and in 9 out of 10 such households, the children are expected to go to college.

c. Most parents want their children to go to college in California, almost half to a two-year college, and almost half to have them reside at home while in college.

d. Those familiar with West Valley College give it a good rating as an educational institution on those factors that are deemed most important in choice of college (except for the location and buildings at Campbell, which should be a plus factor in an election). In addition, strong majorities familiar with West Valley give it good marks for both its relationship with the community and its student body.

6. The San Jose Mercury-News is the most important single potential influence on voters in any forthcoming bond election.

# DISCUSSION

## DISCUSSION

This study, conducted among a cross section of adults living in the West Valley College District, finds what we consider to be a good chance for winning a future election on a bond issue for West Valley Junior College--*if* the election is held *after* a well-mounted campaign on behalf of the college. Our optimism is based on seven key factors:

a. A *very* strong belief held by the vast majority of adults (others as well as parents) that all high school graduates should have an opportunity to go to college.

b. The fact that *9 out of 10* of the parents in the area with one or more children of high school age or less expect or hope to send their children to college.

c. The very strong predisposition that exists on the part of these college-oriented parents to send their children to state-supported *California colleges*.

d. Just about *equal preference* for their children to attend a two-year community college (43%) as a four year college (45%).

e. A desire on the part of many college-oriented parents for their children to live at *home* when they attend college (43%).

f. The existence of a quite *favorable set of attitudes* toward West Valley among those who feel they are familiar with the college.

g. An expressed high interest in and *favorable disposition* toward a future West Valley bond issue election.

*If* all the citizens who say they would vote on a future bond issue actually turned out to vote--and voted according to their present stated sentiments, the issue would carry by a comfortable margin over the 66% required. Let us turn first to discussion of this last point--stated voting intentions.

## STATED VOTING INTENTIONS

### Expressed Interest in Voting is Very High

Toward the end of the questionnaire--after respondents had been asked if, how, and why they had voted as they did in the 1966 bond election, their attitudes toward the location of the new campus in Saratoga, and their preference for a future third campus location, they were asked the following vote intention question:

"32c. If another bond issue for West Valley were put before the voters, it would be to complete the new Saratoga campus, and acquire another campus site elsewhere here in the district. If passed, it would add somewhere between $7 and $15 per year to the average homeowner's taxes for each of the next 20 years--about $10 per year if your home is worth $20,000, for example.

If there were to be another West Valley college bond issue election, do you think you would probably vote <u>for</u> the bond issue, <u>against</u> it, or do you think you probably <u>wouldn't bother</u> voting one way or the other?"

A very high percentage indicated interest in voting in such an election--76% answered that they would vote either for or against it,

While there were differences in percentages indicating interest in voting, high percentages in <u>all</u> groups answered that they would vote positively for or against. About the same number of men and women said they would vote--77% of men, and 74% of women. Among other groups, the most interested in voting are:

| | Percentage saying they will vote on the bond issue |
|---|---|
| | % |
| The college educated | 85 |
| Upper economic levels | 83 |
| Executive and professional people | 84 |
| People living in Saratoga | 90 |
| People who have had people in their families attend West Valley College | 80 |
| People who feel they know a good deal or fair amount about West Valley College | 91 |

The groups at present somewhat less interested in voting are:

| | Percentage saying they will vote |
|---|---|
| | % |
| Non-college educated | 70 |
| Lowest economic level | 73 |
| Housewives | 72 |
| People living in Santa Clara | 73 |
| People who have had no family members attend West Valley College | 75 |
| People who feel they know little or nothing about West Valley College | 71 |

While expressed intentions to vote always exceed realization--these high percentages denote a high degree of potential interest in a bond issue.

## Favorable Sentiment for the Bond Issue is Also Very High

Among those who now say they would vote (eliminating those who don't know whether or not they would vote), sentiment is 3 to 1 in favor of the bond issue as stated in the questionnaire--75% say they would vote for it; 25% against it. This favorable sentiment cuts through all parts of the population. With one exception, over 66% in every important group that said they would vote are in favor of the issue. (The one exception is Saratoga residents.) But while pro-sentiment is high in all groups, it is a little stronger among some than others.

More women than men voters are in favor of the bond issues--79% of women; 70% of men

Slightly more in lower than upper economic levels--75% middle economic; 74% poor; 72% upper

Slightly more white collar workers--75% white collar; 72% executive; 71% blue collar

More whose family members have attended West Valley College--84% whose family attended; 74% who had no family members attend

More who feel they knew about the college--94% who know a good deal; 80% a fair amount; 71% who know little or nothing

Another indication of pro-sentiment are the reports of voting on the last bond issue--which lost. 49% of those interviewed say they voted. (Only 20% at the time actually did). And of those who claimed to have voted, 71% reported that they had voted in favor of the issue. Obviously, these claims concerning past voting are inflated, which doesn't surprise us. Previous surveys we have conducted have always shown some inflation in claimed voting. There are several factors that could contribute to this inflation. Voting is respectable, and people like to say they voted. Three bond issues have been held in the past, and some people may not have been clear in their minds as to which of the bond issues they may have voted on was the last one. Some of the people who voted against the bond issue may have moved out of the community. However, we feel the main factor is that people used this question to express their present sentiments. They either wish they had or thought they should have voted for the issue. This is not an isolated phenomenom. For example, post-election 1960 studies found Kennedy "winning" by a good deal higher margin than was his actual vote.

Expressed Intentions to Vote "Yes" May Not, However, Be Immediately Realizable

In our judgment, neither this high indicated future turnout, nor a 75% - 25% vote in favor of a bond issue is as firm as indicated by the raw data, which is the reason we stressed the need at the outset of this discussion for a well-mounted campaign prior to calling a future election. There are a number of factors that make us question taking these figures at their face value:

1. One factor is the question of location of the third campus. Opinion has not yet solidified as to the ideal location for this. At the present time, more name Santa Clara than other locations, but this is largely because of the vote of Santa Clara residents. If

the location of the third campus is to be an issue in the election, it may well take away some favorable votes from people who want another location than the one decided on--unless steps are taken to "sell" the specific location. (In fact, since the question immediately preceding the vote question let respondents name their preferred location for the third campus, some may have voted "for" the bond issue on the assumption that the third campus would be located where they want it to be.)

2. A second factor that makes us hesitate to rely on the margin of favorable replies is the question of whether those who now think they would vote in favor of the bond issue would actually take the trouble to turn out at an election in as high proportions as those who are against it. It is easy in an interviewing situation for people to <u>say</u> they will vote and vote favorably on something as respectable as more education and more educational facilities. It is something else to get people sufficiently convinced to get out and actually cast a ballot. When we examine the reasons people gave for being in favor of the bond issue, the answers sound as if some respondents may not be sufficiently convinced to put sentiment into action. While some people did give specific answers related to West Valley College and its need for expanded facilities, a good many gave general reasons simply reflecting their belief that education is a good thing. The leading reasons for being in favor of the bond issue fell into

these categories:

| | Total who would vote in favor of future bond issue |
|---|---|
| | % |
| Because education is so important, necessary; must provide education for children | 36 |
| West Valley needs new, better campus facilities--Campbell overcrowded, inadequate | 29 |
| Cited specific values of junior colleges and/or of West Valley | 19 |
| More, better colleges, classrooms needed | 14 |
| More colleges, classrooms needed because of rapid growth of county | 12 |

This tendency to generalize answers suggests that there might be a possible lack of urgency on the part of some who express themselves in favor of the bond issue to get out to the polls. On the other hand, when people who said they would vote <u>against</u> the bond issue were asked why, their answers tended to be specific (and even a little angry sounding) and largely centered on the unwillingness to pay higher taxes. These "against" answers suggest an impetus to get out and vote their convictions.

3. The third factor that raises a caution flag against an immediate election--and in our judgment the most important one, is the high level in the <u>lack of knowledge</u> about or feeling of intimacy with West Valley Junior College--even among people who are considering West Valley for their children. When respondents were asked how much they feel they know about West Valley, a very high percentage volunteered

that they know very little or nothing about it:

| | Total | College plans for child: Definitely or probably will go | College plans for child: Definitely or probably will not go | Have no child below college age |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | % | % | % | % |
| Knowledge about West Valley | | | | |
| A good deal | 7 | 8 | 3 | 6 |
| A fair amount | 21 | 25 | 16 | 16 |
| Very little or nothing | 72 | 67 | 82 | 77 |

Thus, in the interest of turnout--and turnout by those favorable to the bond issue, it would seem desirable to take the time to get more people fired up by increasing their knowledge about the college, its virtues and its needs.

While we have raised some warning flags about the dangers of an immediate election, we feel West Valley is in a good position to sell itself, for the community it serves is clearly education-oriented. Let us turn now to what we see as things to stress, and the foundations on which a successful campaign can be built.

## POSITIVE FACTORS FAVORING WEST VALLEY COLLEGE

### College is Viewed as a "Must"

Only 40% of the adults we interviewed said they had completed any college themselves. But, when we asked at the outset of the interview the following question, almost 80% thought every high school graduate should have the

opportunity to attend college, and this belief exists among people of all economic levels:

"1b. Now, how do you feel in general about some form of college education for young people in this area today--and by some form we mean either a vocational or academic or professional education, and for either two or four years. Do you think that:

| | Total | Socio-economic level A & B | C | D |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | % | % | % | % |
| 1. Every boy and girl who graduates from your local high schools should have an opportunity to get some form of a college education | 78 | 77 | 78 | 80 |
| OR | | | | |
| 2. That every boy who graduates from high school should have a chance to go but that a college education isn't so important for girls | 3 | 3 | 2 | 3 |
| OR | | | | |
| 3. That only high school graduates who really like school and have the ability should go to college | 18 | 18 | 18 | 14 |
| OR | | | | |
| 4. That only those who need special college training like doctors, lawyers and scientists should go to college--the rest should get the training they need in high school or on the job?" | 1 | 1 | 1 | 4 |

In another related question, asked of all parents with one or more children of high school age or less, we again found very strong sentiment for college education, and not only to insure a higher income:

"10. Leaving aside whether people can afford it or not, how do you feel about the actual usefulness of a college education for (child) (oldest child)? Which of these statements comes closest to expressing your feeling? (Card shown respondent)

| | Total | Socio-economic level A & B | C | D |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | % | % | % | % |
| 1. It would be essential for economic, intellectual and social reasons to go to college | 78 | 81 | 80 | 58 |
| 2. It would be necessary to go, but basically only to earn a higher income | 13 | 12 | 14 | 20 |
| 3. It would be desirable, but only if it can be easily afforded | 6 | 4 | 4 | 20 |
| 4. It would be unnecessary--a waste of time and money" | 1 | 1 | 1 | 3 |

## 9 Out Of 10 Parents Expect Their Child To Go To College

Almost all parents with a child of under college age expect or are hopeful that he or she will go to college; and this is true of parents without college education as well as of parents who are college educated:

| | | Education of respondent | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Total | College | High school or less |
| | % | % | % |
| Answered that oldest child will: | | | |
| Definitely go to college | 54 | 65 | 46 |
| Probably go | 37 | 32 | 41 |
| Probably not go | 6 | 3 | 8 |
| Definitely not go | 3 | 1 | 5 |

These figures are well above the national average. In a study we conducted a few years ago, 70% of parents said they expected their children to go to college, as compared to over 90% in the West Valley area.

It is quite clear from other data in the study that the college-oriented parents in the West Valley College area are aware of the explosive increase in the potential college population and the need to provide for it, and that one of the strongest arguments in behalf of a future bond issue is the need to expand West Valley's facilities rapidly enough to take in this expected influx of students.

## West Valley College Is In a Unique Position To Satisfy The Educational Needs For Parents In The Area Who Plan To Send Their Children To College

By virtue of its location and the nature of the college, West Valley Junior College fulfills the higher educational desires for their children for a good many residents.

Among parents who plan to send their children to college:

72% prefer a California college

43% prefer them to live at home (55% who anticipate sending their children to West Valley)

43% prefer to start their child in a 2-year college (45% 4-year)

44% prefer a medium-sized college

58% prefer a state college (only 19% private)

## Almost Half Of Parents Lean Toward West Valley For Their Children

When asked about plans for their oldest child under college age, 48% in total answered that they would send their child to West Valley (13% definitely; 35% probably). 30% answered they would not (22% probably not, and 8% definitely not); 20% had no idea where this child would go. The most frequently mentioned reasons for those who thought that they would send a child to West Valley were: the closeness and convenience of its location (41%); the specific benefits of a junior or two-year college, as opposed to starting in a four-year college (29%), and answers indicating their confidence in the quality of education that West Valley provides (19%).

The 30% of parents who plan to send a child to some college, but not to West Valley, did not explain their reasons in terms of dissatisfaction or dislike of West Valley to any appreciable extent. Only 7%, for example, criticized the current West Valley campus locations; only 3% felt that West Valley's discipline was too lax, and only 2% that West Valley lacked specific courses. The predominant reasons for not selecting West Valley were either because they felt their child had the grades or ability to start in a four-year college, or thought a four-year college would be best if the child turned out to have the required grades and ability (reasons cited by 50%).

Among Those Who Are Familiar With West Valley, It Rates Well On What Counts Most In A College

West Valley Junior College appears to have succeeded in good performance on those qualities that are of key importance to parents (and presumably others would agree) in selection of colleges for their children.

On the two requisites that parents think are most important in a college, people who feel that they know the college rate it well:

88% of parents say the academic standards are extremely important in college selection

81% who feel familiar with West Valley Junior College rate its academic standards as either excellent or satisfactory. (Only 5% rate its academic standards unsatisfactory.)

88% of parents say the kind and number of courses offered are extremely important in college selection

76% who feel familiar with West Valley Junior College rate the kind and number of courses offered as excellent or satisfactory. (11% rate them unsatisfactory.)

People familiar with West Valley College also rate it well on another aspect that should appeal to a community interested in education:

70% rate its relationship with the community as excellent or satisfactory (11% as unsatisfactory)

Fewer familiar with the college rate it highly in the social area--which is less important to parents in college selection than academic prowess. But even here, only a minority low-rates the college:

20% call the college unsatisfactory for social prestige; 18% for social opportunities

However, for those who do place importance on social prestige, presumably money for additional facilities would connote the chance of better social opportunities.

In fact, the only respects in which West Valley Junior College are low-rated by appreciable numbers are respects that should lend themselves to

votes in favor of a bond issue.

47% feel the location at Campbell is unsatisfactory

68% feel that the buildings at Campbell are unsatisfactory

West Valley's Relationship With Its Students is A Distinct Asset

More than one California campus has been rocked by serious disturbances in recent years, and it seems to us that the kind and nature of administration that West Valley has, and how its students react to it will be an important factor in how people make up their minds to vote on any future bond issue.

Before any specific questions were asked about West Valley, we asked respondents the following open-ended question: "Some colleges are considered to have really good reputations. What does a college have or offer that in your mind makes it a really good one?" Predictably, the single most frequent answer was having a good faculty, having a high caliber staff (named by 51%), followed by a 33% response for having high academic standards and excellent courses. But the third most frequent specific answer--and a surprisingly strong third to us, were the 22% who felt that a college with a really good reputation had an administration that was "strong and strict with its students." An additional 11% gave a closely related answer--that a really good college was characterized by "a good student body with a good relationship with the administration."

In view of this sentiment, it is instructive that in the later and specific question, 64% of those who felt they were familiar with West Valley rated its relationship with its students as excellent or satisfactory; only 6% felt the college-student relationship was unsatisfactory.

West Valley's Adult Educational Facilities Are a Distinct Asset

There is considerable interest in local adult education among both the college-educated and the non-college-educated. When asked about the

desirability for local colleges in the area to provide a wide variety of courses for adults, these were the results:

| | Total | Education of respondent: College | Education of respondent: High school or less |
|---|---|---|---|
| | % | % | % |
| Highly desirable | 65 | 70 | 61 |
| Good idea | 26 | 23 | 29 |
| Few would want or need | 7 | 5 | 7 |
| Don't know | 2 | 2 | 2 |

## SUMMARY CONCLUSIONS

To conclude this discussion, we feel that the various ways in which West Valley College "fits" both the college and adult educational needs of the area it serves provide a sound base to strengthen the already strong sentiment existing in favor of a future bond issue. It seems equally obvious that the more people learn about West Valley College--the more they become aware of its values to the community, the greater the likelihood is of a favorable vote of 66% or more in a forthcoming election. As proof, here are the future voting intentions of two key subgroups in our sample--the 30% who felt they know a great deal or fair amount about West Valley, and the 72% who said they know very little or nothing about it:

| Future bond issue voting intentions | Knows a great deal or a fair amount about West Valley | Knows little or nothing about West Valley |
|---|---|---|
| | % | % |
| WOULD VOTE: | 89 | 71 |
| In favor of issue | 74 | 50 |
| Against issue | 15 | 21 |
| WOULDN'T VOTE OR DON'T KNOW | 11 | 29 |

Educating the public about West Valley is not our job, nor does how or where it should be done fall within the province of the researcher. With this caveat in mind, we would like to comment on two points.

First, it seems clear that whatever campaign is undertaken should be broad-based and should be aimed at the citizenry as a whole and not concentrated on particular special groups (unless people who do not have children or children they expect to send to West Valley can be considered a special group. They would naturally have less personal impetus to get out and vote.) There appear to be no "pockets" of dissidence in the sense that some subgroups are strongly negative--either to the importance of education or to West Valley College or the bond issue in particular.

Second, we would like to comment on the importance of the San Jose Mercury-News--not only because of its editorial stand against the bond issue during the last election, but because it seems to clearly be <u>the</u> most important single potential influence on voters in any forthcoming election. We asked respondents at the conclusion of the interview the following question, with the most frequent answers shown below:

"If a new bond issue is put before the voters again, who or what would you most respect in making up your mind how to vote--a local newspaper, or radio or TV station, or someone who you know personally or by reputation or what?"

| | Total sample |
|---|---|
| | % |
| NEWSPAPERS | 37 |
| San Jose Mercury-News | 25 |
| Times Observer | 3 |
| All other papers | 10 |
| WOULD FORM MY OWN OPINION, MAKE UP MY OWN MIND | 24 |
| TELEVISION STATIONS | 14 |
| COLLEGE OFFICIAL, PROFESSOR | 9 |
| RADIO STATIONS | 5 |

Further, 87% of the sample said they read the Mercury-News regularly; no other paper was named by as much as 20%. Among the mass media, the Mercury-News seems to be the most valuable vehicle for disseminating knowledge, and particularly if its editorial position can be changed to support West Valley College in a future bond issue election.